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# Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

*Provisional*

**6946**th meeting
Monday, 15 April 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

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| *President*: | Ms. Mushikiwabo | (Rwanda) |
| *Members*: | Argentina | Mrs. Perceval |
| | Australia | Mr. Quinlan |
| | Azerbaijan | Mr. Mehdiyev |
| | China | Mr. Li Baodong |
| | France | Mr. Araud |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | Luxembourg | Ms. Lucas |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Masood Khan |
| | Republic of Korea | Mr. Kim Sook |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | Togo | Mr. Ohin |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Mark Lyall Grant |
| | United States of America | Mr. DeLaurentis |

## Agenda

Peace and Security in Africa

Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes

Letter dated 2 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/204)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Peace and security in Africa**

**Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes**

**Letter dated 2 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/204)**

**The President**: I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General and the representatives present in the Chamber. Their participation is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, representing the Chairperson of the African Union, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2013/204, which contains a letter dated 2 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

As the President of the Security Council, I hope that this important meeting on the item entitled "Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes" will be an occasion for the Council to revisit the concept and practice of conflict prevention as currently understood within the United Nations system. Recalling the theme, today's briefing aims at examining how we can move from a day-to-day management of conflicts and develop a culture of conflict prevention through skills, mechanisms and institutions that address the root causes of conflicts in Africa.

The African Union has identified various factors and root causes of conflict on the continent, and it has established institutions and mechanisms to address them. We believe that it is the right time for the Security Council to strengthen its cooperation with the African Union and its subregional organizations in order to achieve better results in conflict prevention.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

**The Secretary-General**: I am pleased to address the Security Council on the important subject of preventing armed conflicts and addressing their root causes. Although we are focused today on Africa, there are universal lessons in conflict prevention that apply everywhere around the world.

Conflicts breed where there is poor governance, abuse of human rights and grievances over the unequal distribution of resources, wealth and power. Tensions simmer where people are excluded, marginalized and denied meaningful participation in the political and social life of their country. Unrest flourishes where people are poor, jobless and without hope. To prevent conflicts, we must strengthen democracy, build stronger, more resilient and accountable State institutions, ensure adequate checks and balances, promote the rule of law and work to establish effective democratic control over the armed forces.

Too often, national pride and the self-interest of political actors and spoilers conspire to undermine prevention efforts. Issues related to poor governance and the unfulfilled promise of democracy often lead to conflict. Good governance will be the focus of my report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

More than 20 African countries are holding elections this year. The relatively peaceful elections in Kenya were an example of how electoral disagreements can be handled through the legal process without recourse to violence. In other cases, elections can be a source of instability. The parties may use elections to continue the competition to divide the spoils of war. That is why it is so important for mediation efforts to ensure that peace agreements are not just pacts between political elites to address an immediate political problem; they must also deal with the underlying causes of conflict and allow all stakeholders to participate.

It is also not enough to reach agreements — they must be fully implemented, monitored and enforced. That is clear in the case of the Central African Republic. The violation of the Libreville agreements by parties contributed to the resumption of conflict and, eventually, the unconstitutional change of Government.

Such challenges are particularly acute when States are fragile and armed movements operate with impunity across porous borders, often with the support of neighbouring States. Whether in the Horn of Africa or the Great Lakes region, the continent is still afflicted by interconnected instability spreading from one territory to its neighbours. That contagion has many vectors: economic despair, arms flows, massive population displacements, proxy conflicts triggered by relationships of mistrust, and regional rivalries. In our increasingly interconnected world, regional action to prevent or address conflicts is all the more important.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, national authorities, regional leaders and the international community are coming together not only to deal with the manifestations of violence, but also to address its underlying root causes. I am grateful to the Security Council for endorsing the approach of leaders of the region. Their Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region emphasizes the need to address the structural causes fuelling instability in that country and commits regional actors to shared responsibilities. The Council's new mandate for the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is intended to contribute to efforts for the implementation of the Framework, including through the deployment of an intervention brigade to deal with the problem of armed groups.

In South Sudan, decades of political and economic marginalization resulted in organized military and political resistance. The United Nations has committed to helping that young country, even though we have paid a heavy price. I was outraged by the attack last week that killed a dozen people, including five brave peacekeepers. I thank the Council for joining me in strongly condemning that appalling ambush and calling for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

Since the independence of South Sudan, Juba and Khartoum have made slow but steady progress towards the resolution of post-secession issues, including agreements on border security arrangements, economic relations and oil. But potential sources of conflict remain, including in particular the unresolved status of the Abyei Area,

The conflict in Somalia has multiple, complex causes, including competition for resources and power, a repressive State and a colonial legacy. The crisis is exacerbated by politicized clan identity, easy access to weapons, the presence of a large number of unemployed youth and a culture of impunity that sanctions the use of violence.

The Federal Government of Somalia has entered a new era of peacebuilding and statebuilding. But it faces daunting challenges to restore confidence in the State and the conditions necessary for peace and stability.

I am also concerned about the situation in the Sahel, where countries have faced decades of complex challenges of poverty, the effects of climate change, frequent food crises, rapid population growth, poor governance, corruption, the risk of violent extremism, illicit trafficking and terrorist-related security threats. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that States of the region have limited capacities to deliver basic social services and protect human rights.

When State authority and security institutions erode, it becomes more difficult to manage borders. In Mali, that has paved the way for transnational criminal organizations and terrorist networks to disrupt regional stability and compromise territorial integrity. Severe drought and food insecurity in many countries in the Sahel region, including in Mali, the Niger and Burkina Faso, have also created conditions for instability and undermined stabilization efforts.

The United Nations is at a critical juncture in its engagement in Guinea-Bissau. Following the military coup last year, the United Nations has continued to promote inclusive dialogue among national actors towards the restoration of constitutional order.

In all of our efforts across Africa, the United Nations benefits from reinvigorated regional organizations. They are playing a stronger and role as key strategic partners. The prompt reaction of the Economic Community of Central African States to the crisis in the Central African Republic showed an increased willingness to formulate joint responses to common problems. The United Nations is working to strengthen the conflict prevention and early-warning architecture of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). We are pursuing our 10-year capacity-building partnership with the African Union. We are strengthening our close relationship with Economic Community of West African States on peacebuilding and crisis prevention in West Africa. We are engaging with the African Union, SADC and the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region in the search

for peace in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And we are partnering with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development on the urgent challenge to bring stability to Somalia.

Above all, it is critical to ensure that affected communities own and lead conflict prevention initiatives. Our support for national Governments should focus on building the active engagement of community organizations, the private sector, civil society, women and youth in decision-making. Their activities can help stabilize communities.

Prevention also demands that we address the culture of impunity surrounding sexual violence. As my Special Representative on the issue has rightly said, sexual violence affects more than isolated individuals; it is an assault on the peace and security of entire communities. That is why I place such high priority on addressing that destabilizing and dehumanizing crime. I count on the Council to continue giving priority to preventing and addressing sexual violence in conflict.

I thank the Security Council for its engagement in the committed efforts of the United Nations to address the root causes of conflict in Africa. Through our comprehensive approach, strong partnerships and principled action, we can usher in a new era of lasting stability for the continent and its people.

**Mr. Ohin** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to commend you, Madam President, on convening this debate on the prevention of conflict in Africa, a continent always beset by recurring conflicts. I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing on the question under consideration.

The persistence of conflicts in Africa is a major obstacle to its socioeconomic development. While very often it is relatively easy to identify the immediate factors that trigger those conflicts, the deep causes underlying them are more complex. Their complexity is due to the fact that they originate from a combination of multiple factors — political, social and economic — and to the fact that those deep causes must be sought not only in the legacy of colonialism, but also in ancient struggles for vital areas carried out by emperors or kings.

It is therefore useful to identify all those factors, whose combined effects have had a negative impact on the peace and stability of States, and to provide States with the most appropriate solutions in order to halt their potential tragic consequences for the legitimate aspirations of a continent for lasting socioeconomic development.

It goes without saying that following the redrawing of the map of Africa, which saw the emergence of new States created within the borders imposed by the colonizer, several factors, both internal and external, have contributed to the destabilization of State institutions and still today are at the root of conflicts on the continent. One could cite the contest for political power and the poverty of populations, which are often identified as primary causes of internal conflicts, as well as border problems, which have been at the heart of several inter-State armed conflicts since independence.

Since gaining independence, African States have been confronted with the problem of the difficult choice of representative leaders. Traditional institutions that were familiar to local populations were largely dismantled by the colonizer, and only the Western model of Government, not readily adaptable to the social realities of Africa, became widespread across the continent. The internal conflicts that break out in Africa are often rooted in that laborious apprenticeship in a model of Government and external political concepts for which Africans are not only unprepared, but which also they do not adapt to sufficiently.

It must be noted, unfortunately, that that inadequacy, that structural and functional maladaptation of the State and of institutions bequeathed by colonialism and mechanically slapped on in Africa, continues to generate illegal struggles for power that in many cases are transformed into ethnic or religious rivalries that strengthen the feeling of belonging to a group, to the detriment of the national identity.

Alongside political factors and those related to non-respect for human rights, to the absence of social justice or to the marginalization of some social groups, there are also economic factors. Those factors are no less important and to a very great extent have contributed to weakening the African State and to favouring the emergence of numerous conflicts.

This is a matter, inter alia, of bad management of economic resources, the growing impoverishment of populations, increasingly difficult access to basic social services and a lack of prospects for young people, whose numbers are rapidly growing. Those situations, which create a climate of social tensions and subsequently

lead to the weakening of State structures, in many cases pave the way for the incursion of armed groups, often ethnic-based, into political life. They seize power even though they are not prepared for it.

Another conflict factor has to do with the borders of most African countries, often drawn by the colonial Powers in an arbitrary manner to suit their exclusive interests. That artificial delimitation brought together fundamentally different peoples and divided others having the same cultural identity. To that one must add the porous nature of borders, which facilitates the uncontrolled circulation of weapons that fuel rebels and other armed groups.

Furthermore, ethnic problems are also accompanied by resource issues. A simple difference between two communities on both sides of a border can lead to tensions between States. When those areas have important resources, their management can cause even more serious misunderstandings.

Given those conflicts, which have seriously hampered and, in the current state of affairs, continue to compromise development in Africa, it is necessary, in the framework of conflict prevention, to tackle them at the roots of the evil through a comprehensive global and regional approach. That strategy must include a focus on promoting a democratic culture, on reducing poverty through an equitable distribution of the resources of the country and on swiftly implementing border demarcation programmes.

With regard to the promotion of a democratic culture — the contest for political power being in Africa one of the major causes of many armed conflicts since independence — the promotion and strengthening of a democratic culture, guarantor of human rights, could help to reduce the risk of conflict by providing everybody with equal opportunities to participate in the management of public affairs. The creation of the United Nations Democracy Fund to assist countries that are seeking to establish democracy or to strengthen it is therefore a decisive advance along those lines.

In addition, African initiatives for democracy and good governance, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which are genuine tools for promoting democracy on the continent, represent major advances in the field. The full implementation of the provisions of those instruments and awareness-raising among the various national political actors could contribute greatly to the entrenchment of general democratic principles on our continent.

The overhaul of States' capacities for political governance, and hence their ability to address political and social vulnerabilities, will not promote lasting peace if we do not, at the same time, seek to reduce Africa's endemic poverty.

Situations of scarcity and poverty provide fertile breeding grounds for conflicts. It is therefore urgent to rethink the economic governance of African States through a change in mindset, as it is well known that the economic problems of Africa lie not so much in its poverty but, rather, in the mismanagement of its many riches.

In addition, the benefits of those resources should be equitably shared, and that should not be limited to resources that can be mined. Land and water should be used in more efficient ways in order to provide opportunities, such as fishing, farming, grazing and agriculture, to all populations.

Borders are also a major issue in Africa. While States subscribe to the principle of the inviolability of the borders inherited from colonization, which is a principle adopted by the African Union, the demarcation of those boundaries has, for several decades now, led to structural conflicts on the continent. It is therefore important to remedy that situation by promoting peace, peaceful coexistence between divided communities and security in border regions and their economic development. In that regard, we urge the international community to further support the African Union's border programme, which is aimed at completing the demarcation of borders across the continent in order to reduce the risk of inter-State conflict over resources.

Moreover, my country believes that it is essential to encourage and promote projects on the shared management of transborder natural resources, on the involvement of local populations on both sides of the border in border projects and, ultimately, on regional integration, which will help reduce tensions along borders.

Togo believes that civil society organizations, while not substitutes for the State, have a key role to play in the culture of peace. Efforts should therefore be made to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations through an approach that includes participatory development, where institutional and policy changes

respond to the deep and legitimate desires of the populations concerned.

Let me conclude by emphasizing the need for Africa to find locally generated structural solutions to address the deep causes of conflict. We believe that, if many proposed approaches have been doomed to failure or have at best had mixed results, it is because they were, for the most part, imposed from the outside on the affected populations, actors or victims of those conflicts. It is also important that the Council use conflict prevention mechanisms as much as possible, in particular as provided by the Charter in Articles 40 and 41. Employing such mechanisms will have the advantage of promoting early-warning systems and strengthening the role of the Security Council in conflict prevention, which is by far less expensive than peacekeeping.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia, who will speak on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union.

**Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia): On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union (AU), I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, and your Government on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I also commend you for organizing today's debate on the theme "Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes".

Allow me to also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for being always mindful of the special situation of Africa and for acting accordingly. I would also like to express appreciation to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Togo for being here at this important meeting.

Your excellent concept paper (S/2013/204, annex), Madam President, has proposed that we focus on the structural dimension of the prevention of conflicts in Africa, which is obviously most germane to looking at the root causes of conflicts on our continent.

On the topic of the root causes of conflicts in Africa, there is perhaps no better starting point than the comprehensive report (S/1998/318) submitted in 1998 by the former Secretary-General to both the General Assembly and the Security Council on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. That was a seminal contribution, which rightly brought up Africa's colonial history, the post-Second-World-War ideological rivalry, various external factors and internal governance issues and other matters that are specific to particular situations as having had a major impact as sources of conflict on the continent. Development is therefore, according to the report, central to the prospects for reducing conflict in Africa. Accordingly, the report underlines the vital role that international cooperation for the development of Africa plays in addressing the challenges of conflict. While mentioning the deficits in that area, the report nonetheless makes it clear that Africa has the primary responsibility for preserving its own peace and stability. Today more than ever, the report states, Africa must look to itself.

That is precisely what Africa has done over the past decade or so. Today's Africa is emphatically not the Africa of the 1980s or the 1990s. Many things have changed, including with respect to Africa's readiness to take the lead in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the various subregions of the continent. Two examples will suffice in that regard. The progress made in Somalia, despite the occasional hiccups, would have been inconceivable without the lead role played by African troops, together with the Somali security forces, to keep extremists, including foreign ones, at bay. The wisdom and prudence that was brought to bear on the complex situation between the Sudan and South Sudan also has a decisive African component.

All those factors do not diminish the role of the international community, most of all the United Nations, both with respect to Somalia and the Sudan, as well as other parts of the continent, as the latest developments in Mali have made so obvious. However, it is necessary that Africa's contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security be given due recognition. The point is that much has changed in Africa over the past decade or so.

The change that we have witnessed in Africa over the past decade is also evident in institution-building, including in the area of peace and security. The African Union Peace and Security Architecture, with its Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force, with the Peace and Security Council at the helm, has transformed Africa's capacity to contribute to peace and stability on the continent. Africa has come a long way in that respect, the process having begun in 1993 in Cairo with the establishment of the AU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

On the other hand, no event demonstrates the feebleness of Africa of that period better than the genocide in Rwanda only nine months later. It is

doubtful that the Africa of the current period would allow that to happen. At the minimum, it would raise its voice in time and not sit idly by.

Also in that connection, the Constitutive Act of the African Union shows that Africa has come a long way when, in paragraph (h) of article 4, member States agreed that

> "The right of the Union to intervene in a member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely, war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity".

Paragraph (j) of the same article confers the right on member States "to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security". How much progress that represents in Africa's resolve to address the challenges of peace and security can be fully appreciated only when one considers how strongly the 1963 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Charter was opposed to any initiative even remotely suggestive of what is allowed under article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, to which I have just referred.

No doubt, everything I have mentioned is a manifestation of the trust that Africans have managed to build in one another and of their readiness to strengthen their unity, including with the view to addressing the challenge of peace and security in Africa. I wanted to bring up the question of trust because of the undeniable fact that it has not been present in abundance, as witnessed in paragraph 5 of article III of the Charter of the OAU under "Principles", when member States felt it necessary to agree: that

> "Unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination, as well as of subversive activities, on the part of neighbouring States or any other States".

While much remains to be done, although much of Africa's good work continues to be called into question by some, we have also made great strides in developing the conditions for good governance. The African Union has, for instance, gone on record as not being ready to countenance unconstitutional changes of Government.

All that is to say that, more than at any time in the past, Africa is ready to play its part for peace and stability on the continent. It has the wherewithal to be a good partner to the United Nations and the Security Council for the realization of that objective. We are pleased to note that the partnership between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union is already gradually growing. No one can deny that, despite the progress made, Africa still requires the strong support of the United Nations, including the Security Council, as well as that of other partners. It is our hope, in that regard, that the United Nations Office to the AU will play its proper role with a view to strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. Let me add that the subregional organizations of the continent also play a vital role in peace and stability. It does not help to understate the added value that they bring and how critical they are in that regard.

However, consultations and cooperation between the United Nations and the AU need to develop further. Their nature and content in terms of quality should be commensurate with the vital role that the African Union plays in the peace and security in the region. There is much room for improvement in that regard. The principles of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations should be adhered to. Africa is second to none in that regard. However, such adherence should not be conceived as disallowing a genuine partnership based on taking advantage of each other's strength.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing one crucial point. That relates to how much the lack of institution-building, including the consolidation of State institutions, is understated as one of the major root causes of conflict on our continent. It appears that it is sometimes taken for granted that the weaker the State, the greater the space and the opportunity for democracy to blossom. That is perhaps not always true. In any event, the way to proceed might be to maintain the proper balance. Lessons need to be drawn from recent experiences, including that of Mali. In that connection, tearing down those that have embarked upon building successful institutions may be good neither for conflict prevention nor for putting in place a robust foundation for good governance.

That, in a nutshell, is the message that I was asked by the current Chairperson of the AU to deliver to the Security Council at this meeting.

**Mr. Quinlan** (Australia): We particularly welcome the initiative of Rwanda and your presence here today, Madam President, as we mark the terrible experience of the Rwandan genocide. Rwanda painfully knows the cost of the failure of us all to prevent conflict.

In its opening lines, the Charter of the United Nations defines the purpose of the Organization as being to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The prevention of conflict was the primordial reason that we created the United Nations. Yet, typically, we spend our time responding to situations in which populations are already caught up in the misery of conflict.

There has never been any question that prevention is better than cure. Prevention can save countless lives and untold trauma and grief. The *World Development Report 2011* tells us that, on average, a civil war can cost the equivalent of 30 years of lost gross domestic product growth. No society in conflict has achieved a single Millennium Development Goal. Regional spillovers are inevitable. There are 42 million people displaced today as a result of conflict, violence and human rights abuses.

Today, we are focusing on the root causes of conflict in Africa. I will mention three issues.

First, let me turn to institution-building. The links between strong and trusted institutions, development and conflict-prevention are well known and well understood. In Timor-Leste in 2006, four years after independence, violence erupted between the military and the police, causing further deaths and massive internal displacement. Yet, just two years after that, the country was able to withstand the shock of dual assassination attempts on the lives of the President and the Prime Minister, without further deterioration in the security situation. Over the two intervening years, Timor-Leste was able to develop stronger institutions and to offer alternative tools to violence and handle the shock. The Parliament, the security services under civilian oversight, and justice institutions all played their roles.

Secondly, with regard to economic opportunities, the nexus between security and development is obvious. We simply must work to create — and narrow the gap in access to — economic opportunities, in particular for young people, women and other marginalized groups.

Thirdly, with regard to natural-resource management, natural resources can be a source of conflict, as we know, but can also present decisive opportunities for growth. Australia is sharing its own experience and expertise to support African countries in their efforts to maximize economic benefits from their extractive sectors in a regulated and sustainable manner that returns revenue to the State. Joint development across borders can often be effective.

In addition to addressing root causes, we must also work to minimize the impact of global challenges that exacerbate conflict. I will mention just two.

First, let me turn to small arms and light weapons — the weapons of mass destruction in Africa. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (resolution 67/234 B) two weeks ago was a historic step towards controlling the proliferation of such weapons and their ammunition, but we must work to ensure its robust implementation by our own Governments and by other States with our assistance.

Secondly, climate change is affecting Africa disproportionately, increasing competition for scarce resources such as food and water. We need to utilize all the tools at our disposal to minimize threats. That means bolstering our disaster risk-reduction efforts, improving early-warning and response capacities, and strengthening resource management and building resilience.

I must highlight the responsibility to protect, 19 years on from the Rwandan genocide. Protection from atrocities is not only a reason to strive to avoid conflict, but is itself part of conflict prevention. Likewise, combating impunity for the most serious crimes — including through instruments such as the International Criminal Court, a lynchpin of the international criminal justice system — is essential.

I shall turn now to the role of the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations. As we know, such bodies can have unique comparative advantages in addressing root causes, not least because such causes often transcend State boundaries.

As Ambassador Tekeda Alemu said on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) this morning, the AU is building a transformative peace and security architecture. The Peace and Security Council and the Peace and Security Department are complemented effectively by the strategic use of representatives and AU missions, the appointment of high-level mediators and the dispatch of fact-finding missions — for instance, the joint pre-election observer mission to Kenya.

We commend the African Peer Review Mechanism as an African-driven initiative that allows frank messages on governance.

AU conflict-prevention mechanisms are evolving, and there is a need to support their development. We would, for example, welcome the full operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System and its integration with subregional and national systems, as well as the strengthening of its relationships with the Panel of the Wise and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

AU-United Nations cooperation on prevention has been growing. Its impact has been demonstrated in efforts to avoid an outbreak of renewed hostilities between the Sudan and South Sudan last year. However, that cooperation has often been crisis-driven. Efforts to move beyond a reactive approach have been helped by more institutionalized meetings and dialogues at the working level, through the Joint Task Force and Security Council-African Union Peace and Security Council meetings. We would suggest that we consider conflict prevention at the next such meeting between those two bodies.

In conclusion, we must acknowledge that the Security Council is itself often crisis-driven. We should make better use of preventive tools, including horizon-scanning and increased responsiveness to early warning signs. We welcome Rwanda's intention to focus on root causes in the Council's Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

While many of the root causes go beyond the Council's direct purview, the Council still needs to be focused on those causes and their consequences. Clearly, the cost in human suffering, wasted resources and lost opportunity speaks to why this has to be done.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I would like to thank you, Madam, for having called this meeting on peace and security in Africa on the theme "Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes". On behalf of the United States, I would also like to congratulate Rwanda on its presidency during the present month. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and recommendations to address the root causes of conflict, as well as Ambassador Tekeda Alemu for his statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union.

Violent conflict has been a destructive scourge in Africa, to which the Council has rightly devoted significant attention. The good news is that, after a peak in the 1990s, armed conflict has significantly declined in sub-Saharan Africa, both in the number of conflicts and in their intensity. The Council and the United Nations system, together with the African Union, subregional organizations and other partners, have significantly helped drive that positive trend. The less good news is that many risk factors and drivers of conflict remain.

While every violent conflict is unique and has its own history, several factors fuel or intensify risk, including poverty, real or perceived inequality, the lack of good governance and the rule of law, proximity to instability and cycles of previous conflict. The disenfranchisement of youth, minorities and other groups, or their deliberate manipulation by non-democratic leaders, are explosive potential drivers of conflict. On the other hand, capable and legitimate governance institutions create security, predictability and mutual confidence, which allow individuals and communities to resolve disputes and practice politics peacefully. Free media and a vibrant civil society also play crucial roles in building citizens' confidence by increasing transparency and providing communities with tools to speak up and articulate their concerns and interests. A key common factor in preventing or overcoming conflict is the active presence of credible, capable and widely legitimate governing institutions able to deal with their citizens' most pressing needs, economic growth and jobs, basic services and access to justice.

To the United States, that means we need to energize efforts on a few key fronts. First, we need to get much more serious about poverty eradication. Poverty alone does not cause conflict, but in combination with other factors, it dramatically increases the risk. That is why the United States is mobilizing a wide variety of tools, from the Millennium Challenge Corporation to the African Growth and Opportunity Act to the Administration's global health and food security initiatives, all of which seek to help grow Africa's economies and invest in Africa's people. All of those bilateral initiatives should complement multilateral efforts to address poverty and inequality, not just in Africa but globally. The wider United Nations system has a critical role to play in that regard, as does the private sector.

Secondly, we need to strengthen our focus on governance and institutional challenges, including the security environment needed for good governance to take hold. United Nations peacekeeping operations, when appropriate, can bring about critical security and political stability that give national actors the space

to build their own institutions and carry out peaceful power transitions, as well as provide a foundation for economic growth. Such operations can also create space for the work of the United Nations and other intentional partners in key areas such as justice and security sector reform, rule of law and anti-corruption. We also need to look at innovative ways to nurture the next generations of leadership. In that regard, President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative is working to put younger generations at the centre of economic and political development.

Thirdly, we need to continue to strengthen peacebuilding. Ninety per cent of the civil wars that started after 2000 occurred in a country that had had a civil war in the previous 30 years. We must do better than that. We need to listen to countries that have gone through war-to-peace transitions, as in the Group of Seven Plus, and focus international efforts around what they tell us they need. United Nations peacebuilding instruments also have the potential to provide a platform for the mobilization of national and international partners around common priorities for transition, as we have seen in places including, inter alia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burundi.

Fourthly, we must continue to hone our national and international structures and capacities to anticipate, prevent and respond to conflicts. The Atrocities Prevention Board, for example, helps the United States mobilize action by the United States Government and further develop tools and institutional changes to enable more nimble and effective responses in future.

Fifthly, we need to be able to speak candidly and act credibly to address another kind of root cause: when leaders are willing to take their populations to war or wage war against their own people for their own purposes.

Finally, we need to build stronger and more dynamic partnerships among all actors engaged in conflict prevention and response, based on comparative advantage and the unique capability each can bring. The United Nations, the African Union and Africa's subregional organizations, along with the African Development Bank, the World Bank and major development partners, all must continue to deepen collaboration and strengthen their capacities to address conflict drivers in Africa.

We have much greater knowledge today about what causes conflict. We have a much wider range of potential tools at our disposal. Let us use them with focus, dedication and results.

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to the Government of Rwanda for having organized this briefing and for the concept note (S/2013/204, annex) that it prepared on a topic of such relevance for the Security Council. Madam Minister, we welcome your presence among us. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for the statement he made this morning, and we welcome Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, who on this occasion is representing the African Union.

To speak about Africa in the abstract always entails risks. Africa is a vast, diverse and heterogeneous continent. Perceived from the vantage point of the Security Council's agenda, the continent appears highly problematic. However, perceived from the broader vantage point of the United Nations as a whole — including the initiatives emanating from the New Partnership for Africa's Development — a much more promising image emerges, as noted by Ambassador Alemu. Africa has indeed achieved notable progress in all areas: democratic governance, economic and social development, the consolidation of peace and interregional cooperation.

In other words, it is simply that our limited agenda focuses on situations of instability, conflict, crime, human rights violations and failed States, when, in fact, we are dealing with a region that, in spite of the difficulties and obstacles it faces, has achieved considerable progress over the past 10 to 15 years. That is another way of saying that even the most worrisome situations on our agenda are not necessarily condemned to sink into chaos and desperation.

Somalia, with the progress that has been achieved, is a specific example in that respect, but the African continent as a whole is a source of inspiration for those countries lagging behind, showing them that they have better alternatives.

This issue is a broad one and can be addressed from many different perspectives and national situations. I will limit my remarks to five specific points.

First, I would like to offer some thoughts on one of the most abused phrases in our lexicon: the root causes of conflict. It is clear that it is not enough to send peacekeeping troops to restore stability and peace to a conflict situation if the root causes of a conflict are not addressed. That is, of course, true, but the root

causes of conflicts vary from case to case, and some of those causes — such as in the context of conflicts based on tribal, inter-communal, ethnic or religious divisions — are linked to deeply ingrained cultural traits that are very resistant to change in the short term. The social sciences are far from understanding how to persuade populations with long-standing divisions to find paths towards reconciliation. However, one aspect that we have noted in situations of conflict in Africa, as well as in the Balkans and the Middle East, is that those conflicts tend to intensify in two specific instances.

The first is related to competition for the use of natural resources, especially water, land and pasturage. The second is related to the demarcation of political boundaries that ignore the geographic distribution of certain ethnic populations and tribes. While this observation may not be particularly original, it does offer hints on how we can mitigate those root causes by including in the peacekeeping toolkit issues such as the facilitation of cross-border migrations, especially those of a transitory nature, and by paying more attention to land-tenure issues.

That brings me to my second point: that other root causes of conflict, including social marginalization and exclusion, extreme poverty and vulnerability to systematic violations of the human rights of a population, can be mitigated or corrected by policies tailored to that end. That is why we support the broader concept of peacekeeping that has evolved over the past two decades with a view to addressing complex, multifaceted conflicts. That concept acknowledges that while the resolution of a conflict requires a military presence in order to re-establish stability, it is also important that, in order to bring about lasting peace, concerted efforts be made in multiple areas. Among those areas, we would stress the need for governance systems that the population perceives as representative, as well as transitional justice systems, building a system grounded in the rule of law, promoting the reform of the security sector and strengthening State institutions so that they fulfil their role effectively and efficiently. Undertaking peacebuilding activities together with other peacekeeping activities also makes a lot of sense. Among many other aspects, it requires a closer partnership among the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the multilateral financial institutions.

Thirdly, in that context, we would stress the importance of the role of justice in achieving peace and security in Africa, especially as part of the preventive actions that are incumbent upon the Council. Our delegation organized an open debate on that issue during our presidency of the Council last October (see S/PV.6849), and I do not wish to repeat the contents of the concept note that we prepared on the occasion (S/2012/731, annex). But we do firmly believe that the simple fact that actions that threaten peace, including incitement to violence, can have consequences within the framework of international jurisprudence is proof of progress in the fight against impunity. We believe that the International Criminal Court is an adequate mechanism in that regard. On that particular point, we regret the fact that a reference to the International Criminal Court as an element in conflict prevention could not be included in the draft presidential statement before the Council, as we and other delegations would have preferred. Even more important is to strengthen universal access to justice in each country as a general approach, in particular for victims of conflicts who have suffered all sorts of humiliation, especially members of the most vulnerable groups, women and children. The application of justice involves sanctions for the perpetrators and reparations for the victims.

Fourthly, perhaps more than any other, the African continent has multiple regional and subregional institutions at its disposal, starting, of course, with the African Union. The manner with which the Council interacts with those institutions within the framework of Chapter VIII would produce more than enough material for a separate debate. But it should be noted that, in all the agenda items that the Council has before it, there is a noticeable proactive participation on the part not only of the African Union but of other subregional actors. The Council's partnership with one or more regional institutions is different in each case, ranging from the African Union Mission in Somalia, which is basically an African Union operation, to the African Union/United Nations hybrid operation in Darfur, and to various intermediate solutions with subregional partners. The point is that the multiplicity of partnerships is complex and sometimes poses difficulties with respect to jurisdictional and operational questions, which requires better coordination among the parties and greater conceptual clarity with regard to "who does what". However, on balance, the strong presence of African institutions complementing the Security Council has been highly positive for peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa.

That brings me to my fifth and final point, which is most timely at present. I am referring to our recent debate on extending our peacekeeping activities to incorporate elements of peace enforcement (see S/PV.6928). The creation of an intervention brigade within the framework of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic People's Republic of the Congo in support of the central mandate of the Mission to protect civilians in that country, and the current proposal of the Secretary-General to create a force in Mali that

> "would operate under robust rules of engagement with a mandate to use all necessary means to address threats to the implementation of its mandate" (*S/2013/189, para. 75*).

They may be justifiable on their own merits, but, as we have stated on previous occasions, we are concerned at what we perceive as a continuous erosion of the basic principles of impartiality and non-use of force in a peacekeeping operation. Although that concern is not Africa-specific, since it is part of what we could call a doctrine of peacekeeping, the only specific cases that have surfaced are located in that region.

In conclusion, it is in Africa where we have derived most of the lessons learned on peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and that is where the most significant progress has been achieved, without forgetting that those achievements also come together with great challenges still awaiting resolution.

**Mrs. Perceval** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to note your presence here today, Madam President, and to warmly welcome you among us. I would also like to welcome the presence of Mr. Elliot Ohin, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and Ambassador Tekeda Alemu for their briefings.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam President, on the work of your delegation in holding the presidency of the Council for the month of April, in particular that of our dear and respected friend Mr. Eugène-Richard Gasana. We would also like to say how much we appreciate everything the Rwandan delegation is doing on a daily basis as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

By way of introduction, I would like highlight three points.

First, we are glad to see the imminent adoption of the draft presidential statement with the conviction that it is an important result of the work of the Council.

Secondly, we would like to point out that African conflicts and subjects, as is well known, account for the majority of the meeting time of the Council. I would also point out that it is also true that a great deal of progress has been made by most African countries, the African Union and other subregional organizations in the prevention of conflicts, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, in questions of development and in the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy, the rule of law and constitutional order.

The third point I would make is that, given the fundamental principle of sovereignty, the primary responsibility for peace and security in Africa is the responsibility of African countries themselves. It is their peoples and their Governments that must peacefully resolve conflicts and deal with the deep-seated causes of those conflicts.

At the same time, Argentina is a firm believer in the importance of the support that the African countries should receive from the international community and the United Nations. Such support should be based on a policy not of intervention but of multilateralism, and should lead to cooperation and complementarity, not to new forms of colonialism.

Since we have been asked to focus on the structural aspects of preventing conflicts, there are, in our view, five aspects that are key to tackling the possible causes of conflict. First are justice and the fight against impunity as factors in preventing conflict. We know there can be no lasting peace without justice. Argentina, from its own experience, is convinced that combating impunity helps to prevent conflicts, unite society and strengthen democracy, since such justice sends a clear message that serious crimes will not be tolerated. In that context, the role of the international ad hoc tribunals established by the Council has paved the way for a new phase, an era of accountability, one that is another step on the road to a universal fight against impunity. In that regard, the International Criminal Court is unquestionably one of the most notable achievements of multilateral diplomacy. Since it was established, a little more than 10 years ago, it has become the centre of the criminal justice system for the international community. We feel that the emerging international criminal justice system is the present and future true and legal path of "never

again" for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The reference in today's draft presidential statement to the international criminal justice system is simply a reference to the International Criminal Court, which is why Argentina regrets that it was not possible to actually name the Court in that statement.

The second aspect is the regulation of the arms trade. The peacekeeping operations of the United Nations represent a cost of $7 billion a year, while the estimated cost of armed conflict worldwide amounts to $400 billion yearly. In the case of Africa, it is estimated that armed violence costs $18 billion annually. As the Secretary-General pointed out, 60 years of United Nations peacekeeping operations have cost the international community less than six weeks' worth of current military expenditures. That demonstrates that, without adequate regulation of international transfers of conventional weapons, the human and financial costs will continue to be immense. That is why the General Assembly's adoption, on 2 April, of the Arms Trade Treaty (resolution 67/234B) represents a historic step.

Thirdly, there are the economic, social and environmental aspects. We need a comprehensive approach to the effective prevention of conflicts. One such aspect can be found in the related issues of climate and security. Years of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption have inflicted significant damage on the natural equilibrium of our climatic system. While it is true that dealing substantively with the issue of climate change falls within the purview of another area of the Organization, I would also like to recall here the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility. The industrialized nations bear the major part of the responsibility for avoiding the outcome represented by the most pessimistic forecasts of the impact of climate change on our countries. The international community should continue to work for the development of African countries so that that region, which will be seriously affected by climate change, will possess the means necessary for mitigation and adaptation.

Concerning food security, about 1 billion people around the world are currently suffering from hunger. In the past four years, Africa was the only region where the number of hungry people increased, from 175 million to 239 million, which, with almost 20 million more added, amounts to almost one quarter of its population. Is that the fault of Africans? Argentina believes that world hunger is not the fault of the world's peoples; it is not the result of volatile food prices, as some would like us to believe, but the result of poverty and the unfair distribution of wealth. Prices that are being kept artificially low by protectionist international agricultural trade and subsidies from developed countries are one of the principal reasons, affecting vast areas of the world. That is why we believe that the solution should be centred around increased food production with access for more people.

Another fundamental issue that Argentina believes should be addressed is financial speculation, through the application of adequate, balanced regulations and instruments — something that is greatly needed by African countries and those in Latin America and the Caribbean. Briefly, concerning the current global economic and financial crisis, I would also like to say that African, Latin American and Caribbean countries are united in demanding changes to the international monetary and financial system. Only substantial change to the rules, structure and operations of the International Monetary Fund and other institutions can ensure that the monetary system is compatible with the goals of a sustainable world economy. The financial system cannot continue to operate as though nothing had happened. We are being given the same recipes that led to disaster before in poor and developing countries, and today they threaten social cohesion and the quality of democracy in developed countries.

Briefly, concerning human rights, I would like to highlight the importance of the Council's inclusion of the gender perspective and the equality of women in peacekeeping operations in terms of the prevention of violence against women and children and their full participation in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution. We also feel that it is essential to maintain and strengthen development assistance and the capacities of democratic States. In that context, we believe that the protection of the rights of children and providing young people with equal opportunities and conditions are crucial.

Fifthly, concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes, Argentina firmly believes that any method that settles disputes peacefully is also worth using for settling conflicts. In that regard, we stress the special role that the Charter of the United Nations entrusts to the Secretary-General in the area of good offices and mediation, as well as the obligation incumbent upon all Member States to consent to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

We have great respect for the fraternal nations of Africa with regard to issues that my country believes affect them, situations where peace in Africa is constantly threatened. We stress the importance of the African Union's growing participation through various mechanisms in helping to settle conflicts affecting Africa. The United Nations should not impose formulas that claim to be a rigid road map for our peoples while representing the interests of only a few.

Given that most of the situations being considered by the Security Council have their origin in Africa, Argentina considers that, in any Security Council reform, the issue of the representation of the African continent in this body is particularly important. It is also essential that we rigorously implement the arms embargoes and request States to seek to ensure that their citizens or companies avoid violating those sanctions. Similarly, the fundamental debate on the scope, mandates and nature of peacekeeping operations must be considered in the light of the experience gained in Africa. There are many challenges, but undoubtedly we are on our way to finding and establishing the rules of the game for a more fair, egalitarian and balanced world.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are glad to welcome you, Madam Minister, to the presidency of the Security Council. We are grateful to the delegation of Rwanda for convening this meeting on this very important topic, namely, the prevention of conflicts in Africa by addressing the root causes. Undoubtedly, that issue is crucial to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In recent years the United Nations as a whole, the Security Council, the leadership of the Secretariat and many regional and subregional organizations have carried out significant work in identifying the causes of conflicts and preventing them, including those on the African continent. In that regard, it is clear that the focus should be placed primarily on broadly overcoming the many political, social, economic and humanitarian problems that are compounded by a host of new transnational challenges and threats. They include international terrorism, religious extremism, organized crime, drug trafficking, the illegal arms trade and the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Of course, that list is far from complete.

Quick and simple solutions to the main challenges in the area of conflict prevention do not exist. A balanced strategy that takes into account the relationship between security, social and economic development and human rights must be developed. At same time, we believe that the primary responsibility for the prevention of conflicts in Africa lies with the inhabitants of the continent themselves. Any assistance from international partners in that area should not be imposed. The same holds true for the duplication of efforts and, especially, competition by non-regional forces, which are counterproductive.

The successful prevention of conflicts, in particular in Africa, depends on the skilful use of a number of specific tools, including early warning and response, preventive diplomacy, mediation, good offices, reconciliation and confidence-building measures. Significant return is reaped by investing in conflict prevention and by strengthening the capacity of the United Nations, both in logistical and intellectual terms.

Russia considers it very important to continue to use of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations while encouraging regional and subregional organizations to take initiatives in the areas of preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes. That chapter encourages Member States to prioritize measures aimed at preventing conflicts, ranging from the use of local instruments through the use of the Security Council.

The United Nations and regional organizations are called upon to complement each other by using their objective comparative advantages. For the United Nations, its strength is, first of all, the universal nature of its work and membership, as well as its universally recognized legitimacy. Regional and subregional organizations, in turn, can often have the best knowledge of the situation within their areas of responsibility and, in many cases, have more customized preventive diplomacy mechanisms that take into account the local specifics. There has also certainly been no change to the Charter of the United Nations, which gives the Security Council the leading role in maintaining international peace and security.

In order to prevent conflicts in Africa, the inhabitants of the continent need to play a key role themselves. It is important to adopt comprehensive and consistent measures to prevent the development of illegal armed groups and strengthen good neighbourly relations; to expand cooperation in order to ensure border security; to prevent the spread of conflicts, arms or mercenaries

across borders; to ensure effective State Governments; to combat poverty and mass unemployment, especially among youth; and to combat corruption. That list could be continued.

We welcome the increasing activity of the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa to prevent conflict on the continent. A central role in those efforts is played by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the Continental Early Warning System and the Panel of the Wise. We attach great importance to the African Standby Force. The African Peer Review Mechanism and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance should be effective instruments to eradicate the root causes of conflict.

Subregional organizations, including the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of Central African States, also make significant contributions to the prevention and resolution of conflicts. We support strengthening the partnership between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to resolve crises. We further support the continuing development of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in other formats as well. Another important factor is the cooperation between the Organization and African subregional organizations.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia is making a significant contribution to the development of strategies for the international community and practical measures to strengthen peace and security in Africa, including the prevention of conflicts. We are providing consistent political support to the appropriate forces of the African community. We are prepared to continue to contribute to the strengthening of the African continent's ability to combat crises, including through the training of African peacekeepers and law enforcement officials in Russian institutions.

We are convinced that any obstacles to preventing conflict can best be overcome through partnership. There should be no preaching or ideological stereotypes imposed from the outside.

**Mr. Li Baodong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks the delegation of Rwanda for its initiative in convening this open Security Council meeting on the theme "Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes". I welcome Her Excellency Minister Mushikiwabo in presiding over today's meeting. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon for his briefing and thank His Excellency Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, for his statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union.

In recent years, the overall situation of peace and security in Africa has remained stable. The aspirations of the African peoples for peace and stability have been growing. The capabilities of African countries and regional organizations in responding to their own peace and security issues have been reinforced. Nonetheless, Africa remains the continent with the highest concentration of conflicts and the most fragile security situation. Taking effective measures to prevent African conflicts, in particular by addressing the root causes of African conflicts, is of great importance for the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

The root causes of conflict in Africa are complicated. There are territorial, religious and ethnic problems left over by history's legacy. There are also practical problems faced by African countries, such as poverty, underdevelopment and weak capacities. Addressing the root causes of conflicts in Africa calls for integrated measures that address both the symptoms and the root causes. I wish to underscore the following points.

First, effectively helping Africa to achieve economic growth and social progress is the fundamental means to address the root causes of African conflicts. In the light of the priority areas identified by African countries themselves, China calls upon the international community to further increase investment in Africa and comprehensively honour its commitments of assistance and debt relief. Walking the talk is essential. Africa is by no means the private domain of any single country. Developed countries should be positive and open-minded in viewing the mutually beneficial cooperation among emerging countries and Africa and should work together with them for the rejuvenation and development of Africa.

Secondly, the will of African countries should be fully respected. African countries' exploration of their development paths in line with national conditions is conducive to eliminating the root causes of conflicts

and to realizing long-term stability. The international community should fully respect African choices and refrain from arbitrary interventions or the imposition of ideas on others. The vast African continent is a big family with a shared destiny. African countries and regional organizations have the deepest understanding of their own regional issues.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of African Unity, a milestone in the African peoples' aspirations in pursuit of alliance and self-renewal.

The international community should uphold the principles of objectivity and impartiality. It should comprehensively and actively support African people in addressing African problems with African means and the efforts and the constructive role of the African Union and regional and subregional organizations in addressing African conflicts. The international judicial system should also play a constructive role in promoting the realization of peace and security in Africa. The International Criminal Court should uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, while respecting the judicial traditions and realistic needs of African countries and avoiding double standards.

Thirdly, to effectively help Africa mobilize resources, capacity-building in Africa should be stepped up. Resource and capacity constraints represent the biggest bottleneck for African countries and regional organizations in seeking to address the root causes of conflicts. In the light of the needs of Africa, we call on the international community to actively provide assistance in such areas as politics, capital, technology and capacity-building. We hope that the United Nations will further enhance coordination and cooperation with Africa and actively respond to Africa's requests for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations and the provision of financial and technical support.

Fourthly, to enhance international coordination and collaboration, various United Nations agencies, the relevant peacekeeping operations, special political missions and the relevant countries and regional organizations should further enhance communication and pool resources so as to maximize synergy and help Africa to eradicate the root causes of conflicts. It is essential to leverage the role of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission in helping post-conflict countries consolidate peace.

China attaches great importance to preventing conflict and addressing the root causes of conflicts in Africa. For a long time we have been providing substantial assistance to Africa through various channels and platforms, including the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. Not long ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping, during his visit to Africa, reiterated the solemn position of China to unswervingly enhance solidarity with and mutual assistance for African countries and to continue increasing assistance to Africa within its capabilities.

China has always constructively participated in peace and security issues in Africa. It has continued to support the efforts of African countries and the African Union and other regional organizations to safeguard their national sovereignty and address their own problems. During the fifth ministerial meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, in 2012, China launched the China-Africa Cooperative Partnership initiative, which will continue to provide financial and technical assistance to Africa for maintenance of peace and security.

China will continue to work with the international community to make its due contributions to the realization of sustainable peace in Africa.

**Mr. Mehdiyev** (Azerbaijan): I would like to start by expressing our gratitude to the Rwandan presidency of the Security Council for organizing this important meeting to discuss the ways of addressing the root causes of conflicts in Africa. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and Ambassador Tekeda Alemu for their statements.

In 1998, the Secretary-General submitted the first comprehensive report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318). That detailed report provided a clear and candid analysis of the sources of conflicts in Africa and put forward important recommendations to reduce conflict and build a strong and durable peace. At the heart of the report was a call to African countries and to the international community to demonstrate political will in order to transform the rhetoric into reality and to take concrete actions in a number of areas. After 15 years, that call still maintains its relevance.

In the past decade, Africa as a whole has made significant progress. Many African States have taken serious steps towards political stability, democratization and sustainable economic and social development.

However, despite all the efforts and achievements, the goal of peace and prosperity on the African continent has yet to be re- lized. Ongoing old conflicts and emerging new ones and instability, coupled with political, security, economic and humanitarian challenges, have not ceased.

Notwithstanding the diversity among the African countries in many respects, as well as the differences in their external and domestic political aspirations, their economic development dynamics and their social fabrics, the root causes of conflicts are, on the whole, similar and interlinked. They are also complex and multifaceted. It is not possible to define one single underlying caus- or to design a universal solution to all conflicts in the continent. A comprehensive, integrated and radical response and consistent engagement of international, regional and national actors are critical in that regard.

As a country suffering from the occupation of a significant part of its territory and the forcible displacement of hundreds of thousands of its citizens, Azerbaijan fully understands the threats and challenges affecting countries with unresolved conflicts, including those in Africa. We proceed from the firm position that all efforts aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa and elsewhere must be based on the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of States.

Further resolute and targeted measures are required to end impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. In particular, ending impunity is important not only for prosecuting and bringing to justice those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, ethnic cleansing or other grave violations of international humanitarian law, but also for ensuring sustainable peace, truth and reconciliation. In any event, the conflict prevention and resolution initiatives considered by the Security Council and regional arrangements must ensure that peace and justice work together effectively.

The illegal exploitation of and trade in natural resources in Africa remain one of the factors conducive to the emergence and recurrence of conflicts. There is a need to address that issue through employing a range of instruments to limit the trade in conflict resources. International assistance should be enhanced to ensure the effectiveness of national and regional initiatives designed to address the negative implications of the illegal exploitation of natural resources in all its aspects.

In recent years, remarkable efforts have been displayed by the African Union, as a leading regional player, and subregional organizations in Africa to collectively promote peace, security and stability on the continent. We have also seen significant progress in developing the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.

At the same time, it should be stressed that responsibility for peace and security in Africa, including addressing the root causes of conflicts, lies primarily with African countries, whereas the international community, including the United Nations, should support and complement the relevant national and regional processes.

Enhanced cooperation with the African Union and its member States is one of the foreign policy priorities of Azerbaijan. We fully support the approach that international efforts to prevent conflicts and consolidate peace in Africa should be channelled towards sustainable development and human and institutional capacity-building in African countries in line with their priorities and the relevant capacities of African organizations.

My country has implemented various assistance programmes and provided financial aid to alleviate humanitarian challenges in some African countries. We are determined to continue our dialogue with the African Union and its member States and to jointly explore further opportunities to deepen our engagement in many areas critical to establishing peace and prosperity on the African continent.

**Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg would like to thank Rwanda for organizing this briefing during its presidency of the Security Council on a topic of great importance, that is, "Prevention of conflicts in Africa: addressing the root causes". We are honoured to have you, Madam President, presiding personally over this meeting.

The conflicts that unfortunately destabilize certain parts of the African continent engender devastating violence, which has resulted in systematic violations of human rights, including those of women and children, large-scale sexual violence, massive internal displacement, worsening humanitarian crises and the destruction of infrastructure. Those conflicts bring socioeconomic development and poverty eradication efforts to a brutal halt. It is a fact that violent conflict constitutes one of the principal obstacles to the

achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It prevents millions of individuals from living in dignity.

In that context, it is up to the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and to the whole United Nations system to strengthen their efforts, in harmony with the African Union, regional organizations and African States, to prevent conflict in Africa by tackling its root causes, thereby contributing to ensuring lasting peace.

For our part, we would like to emphasize certain root causes that in general constitute triggers and drivers of conflict. We also wish to underline elements of a response before addressing two specific cases: the Sahel region and the Great Lakes region.

It is the primary responsibility of States to prevent conflict. We therefore believe that there is a need to pay renewed attention to models of governance, including economic governance, and to the paths of democracy, as well as to the strengthening of State institutions that have legitimacy and competence, which improve the security and socioeconomic well-being of all citizens.

Certainly there is no single model of governance, but to prevent conflicts, to promote peace and to lay the groundwork for sustainable development in Africa, it is important to put in place an inclusive political and economic governance that allows for an equitable redistribution of wealth, guarantees all citizens better social protection and gives priority to the creation of decent work, especially jobs for young people. In certain cases, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the absence of land rights constitute a trigger for conflict. We believe that particular attention should be given to the transparent management of natural resources and of the revenue those resources generate for State budgets.

Luxembourg's experience in the context of the Peacebuilding Commission strengthens our conviction that such a holistic approach — which links sustainable socioeconomic development, peacebuilding and security and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law — is indispensable to prevent a relapse into conflict and violence. In that context, security and defence sector reform, in a spirit of national ownership, is of particular importance. Peacebuilding and State-building aim at renewing the social contract and at building trust between a State and its citizens, with a view to building the foundations of a just, prosperous and peaceful society.

The fight against impunity for the most serious crimes is an important element of conflict prevention. There can be no lasting peace without justice. The pursuit of justice and the quest for peace are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. National criminal justice systems, which also represent a key link in transitional justice, constitute the first line of defence against impunity. In a complementary fashion, the International Criminal Court plays a crucial role in bringing to an end the most serious crimes — the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and, in the future, the crime of aggression. The deterrent effect of the Court's mere existence enables the bolstering of conflict prevention. We regret, therefore, that it was not possible to include an explicit reference to the International Criminal Court in the draft presidential statement that we will adopt in the context of this meeting.

Since the 2005 World Summit, Luxembourg has supported the elaboration and the implementation of the principle of the responsibility to protect, so as to avoid the recurrence of crimes against humanity, notably genocide, like those committed during the last century in Europe, as well as in Rwanda. We owe it to the memory of the millions of victims of crimes of the past to refine that principle together, as the United Nations. We welcome the fact that the principle is clearly reflected in the draft presidential statement.

We would like to underline the importance of partnerships and cooperation among the Security Council, the African Union and subregional organizations in the area of conflict prevention. Luxembourg supports efforts undertaken to develop the partnership between the European Union and Africa in that context. The European Union has provided more than €50 million to support the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture. Those resources allow for a strengthening of the capacities of the African Union Commission and of the subregional organizations, notably the mechanism of the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force.

The regional dimension of conflict prevention has rightly received increased attention in recent years. In the case of the Sahel region, the multifaceted crisis, which led Mali to the edge of the precipice at the beginning of this year, should come as a lesson. It is now more urgent

than ever to define an integrated strategy for the Sahel region that would make it possible to prevent conflict for all States in the region in a lasting way. Ultimately, it could also be useful for the United Nations to define an integrated strategy for the Horn of Africa.

In the case of the Great Lakes region, we welcome the signing, on 24 February, of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. The signing of this framework agreement represents a unique opportunity to break the cycle of violence and to tackle the root causes of the conflict by stressing regional cooperation, including terms of trade. For the framework agreement not to end up like the regional agreements of 2004 and 2006, which have remained dead letters, all signatories will have to fulfil their part of the bargain, and the international community must fully support them.

In conclusion, I should like to underline that Luxembourg's commitment in Africa bears witness to our conviction that we need to adopt a holistic and multidimensional approach that encompasses conflict prevention, the consolidation of peace and the maintenance of international peace and security. Such an approach would recognize the intrinsic link between security and development, two objectives that can be achieved only through respect for and the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

**Mr. Masood Khan** (Pakistan): We welcome to the Security Council Ms. Louise Mushikiwabo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda, and we commend you on presiding over today's debate. We also thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Togo, Mr. Elliot Ohin, and Ambassador Tekeda Alemu of Ethiopia for their statements. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and support his efforts and initiatives to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa.

Let me start on a positive note. Four things distinguish Africa today, namely, an impressive economic turnaround, Africa's growing ownership of its destiny, the effective leadership demonstrated by the African Union and subregional African organizations, and the successes in Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in conflict resolution and management. We also welcome the recent signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.

Despite that good news, the fact is that roughly 62 per cent of the items on the Council's agenda are African issues. Some issues are perennial and protracted, others have shown recurrent relapse. Still others point to the fragility of the peace and stability that were so painstakingly achieved.

What are the divers of conflict in Africa? Without sounding facile, we can say that they are perceived to be the legacy of artificial borders, the exploitation of Africa's natural resources, poverty, ethnic and tribal divisions, the illicit trafficking in small arms and, now, the rise of extremism and terrorism, with their national, transnational and global dimensions. However, Africa has decided to address those challenges head-on, and it is determined to succeed. Africa is forging ahead. For Africa, those are existential — and not mere historical — issues.

Pakistan has a long-standing and abiding commitment to stability and progress in Africa. We were steadfast partners in Africa's struggle to exercise its right to self-determination against colonial rule. Over the past 53 years, Pakistani peacekeepers have played an instrumental role in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding in Africa. With the help of other partners, we have also worked to prevent the relapse of conflicts in a number of post-conflict situations in Africa. Thus far, more than 132 of our brave peacekeepers have laid down their lives, 119 of them in Africa. To date, we have contributed more than 140,000 United Nations peacekeepers worldwide. Today, 8,221 Pakistani peacekeepers are deployed in six peacekeeping missions, 8,075 of which are deployed in Africa.

We believe that greater reliance on the tools for preventive diplomacy provided under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as those for coordination under Chapter VIII, will help prevent conflicts and stall their recrudescence.

Structural prevention in Africa can be achieved by strengthening the nexus between security, development and human rights, without embarking on the more treacherous path of nation building. Nations will be built by their own people, not by the Security Council or the African Union, which can legitimately help them prevent conflicts.

Integrated peacekeeping missions ensure that efforts to address the root causes of conflict continue even after the departure of peacekeeping missions. Those missions assist in security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR),

the rule of law, the enforcement and monitoring of human rights and national reconciliation. We laud the role of the United Nations regional offices in providing services to prevent conflicts and in helping post-conflict countries with good offices, mediation, dialogue, electoral assistance and assistance for SSR and DDR. Similarly, the Peacebuilding Commission's role is also critical in preventing the fresh eruption of conflicts.

The economic development of Africa is the best way to address the root causes of conflicts. Over the past several years, Africa has experienced strong economic growth and an improvement in social development indicators. This year, Africa's gross domestic product is projected to grow by 6 per cent, and the continent is poised to become middle income by 2030. Since 2005, foreign direct investment flows have increased by 50 per cent, and there is a boom in investment conferences on Africa. Emphasis on optimal population growth, urbanization, technology and good governance are redefining the African landscape.

That does not mean that aid flows should dry up. On the contrary, many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, need massive assistance for their economies and social sectors.

Africa has resorted to the wide array of tools available under Chapter VI, with a view to preventing disputes and conflicts. African countries have put in place a solid peace and security architecture through regional and subregional organizations, with built-in mechanisms for conflict prevention and mediation. Bodies such as the Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise give strength to that architecture.

The African Union has provided strategic coherence, leadership and on-the-ground management in nearly all of the conflicts on the continent. Through close partnership, it has added value to the work of the United Nations, particularly that of the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

In recent times, there have been new flare-ups in Mali, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and South Sudan. We are now witnessing the rise of terrorism, drug and weapons trafficking and piracy. The entire Sahel region is under threat of destabilization due to the rise of organized crime. The conflict in Mali is linked to terrorism and organized crime.

The integrated United Nations strategy for the Sahel region, backed by the necessary financial resources, must be made to work. The United Nations should continue to provide support to strengthen the African Union's capacity for conflict prevention under the umbrella of the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union. The deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali underscores the commitment of the continent to address its conflicts. However, that is being hampered by a shortage of resources.

Let me now turn to two pressing issues that have been identified as potential sources of conflict by the Secretary-General, that is, youth education and employment and conflict and natural resources.

Some 60 per cent of Africa's population of 1 billion is under the age of 25. That youth bulge, if not harnessed properly, could have grave costs. It is therefore important to have a comprehensive and integrated approach to youth development.

The continent is rich in natural resources, but poor in wealth. Fights over natural resources, the absence of land rights and land tenure systems and the large-scale acquisition of land by foreigners for industrial agriculture or logging keep fuelling and re-igniting conflicts. The Security Council and the countries concerned should make greater efforts to identify and bring to justice those who are benefiting from that illegal exploitation of natural resources in Africa, both within and outside the countries concerned. African countries should be given assistance to exploit their resources and get a fair share of their trade.

In conclusion, we would like to underscore that conflict prevention works, and works best when there is synergy among all the relevant institutions and actors. The United Nations and the international community must therefore invest more in conflict-prevention mechanisms. It is far better to invest in conflict prevention than to expend resources in dealing with the aftermath of conflicts. Pakistan stands ready to engage in that effort.

**Sir Mark Lyall Grant** (United Kingdom): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting this morning. I should like to take the opportunity to congratulate Rwanda on its presidency of the Security Council this month. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and Ambassador

Alemu for his statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union.

Conflicts in Africa continue to take a devastating toll on the continent. Lives are needlessly lost. Populations face brutal consequences, such as sexual violence, the use of child soldiers and mass displacement. Conflict has also stopped Africa delivering on its enormous potential. Africa has vast natural resources, some of the fastest growing economies in the world and, in the African Union, an increasingly strong and influential continental organization. However, only by addressing the root causes of conflict can Africa secure sustainable peace and unlock that potential.

As is known only too well, 800,000 people tragically died in the Rwandan genocide. That mass atrocity threatened the very existence of Rwanda and its people. The international community recognizes with shame that we should have done more. We said never again. The doctrine of the responsibility to protect was endorsed by all Members at the World Summit in 2005 as a means of delivering on that promise. The responsibility to protect is the foremost responsibility that sovereign Governments owe to their populations, but the international community also has the responsibility to support and assist States in that task.

Today, we take stock of our performance in tackling conflict in Africa. We should admit that we are not doing well. In the past few months alone, crises in Mali, the Central African Republic and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have emerged or worsened. We must learn the lessons of our failure. We must better spot the warning signs and act accordingly. We must use the right tools at the right time.

The United Kingdom believes that representative, legitimate and inclusive political systems, unwavering respect for human rights and the rule of law and social and economic development are the most important factors that help to prevent conflict in Africa, as elsewhere. The crisis in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo reminds us that, when such factors are absent, it is very difficult to break the cycle of conflict. Delivering effective national institutions is a key part of upstream prevention. We need to help national Governments in building capacity through mechanisms such as the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. All Member States should invest early in such fragile States. The work of the United Nations on civilian capacities and the efforts of African countries to share expertise and experiences are also important.

The United Kingdom particularly welcomes last week's commitment by the Group of Eight Foreign Ministers to take steps that address and deter sexual violence, which too often accompanies and fuels conflict. We will follow up that initiative during our Security Council presidency in June.

When a crisis is on the horizon, we need to spot it early. That means, as the Secretary-General told us, that improving our early-warning systems is vital. The United Nations Office for West Africa and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa are starting to play a role, but it is not yet enough. We hope that the recently established United Nations Crisis Operations Centre will also make a difference but, equally, early warning is useful only when it is acted upon. The United Nations is slowly getting better at mediation and preventative diplomacy but there is much more to be done. Too many members of the Council shy away from their responsibilities with regard to conflict prevention.

Where conflict breaks out, we must hold those responsible accountable and demonstrate that impunity will not be tolerated. The International Criminal Court and the other regional tribunals are vital to ending impunity. We need to facilitate the transitional justice that enables countries to emerge and to recover from violent conflict.

Preventing conflict and addressing its root causes are a long-term and complex process. If we are to succeed in helping African States in that endeavour, we must work together to support local processes and to build local capacities. That means, as others have said, that we should support the African Union Peace and Security Council in its conflict-prevention work, while respecting the Security Council's global responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. We must promote preventative diplomacy and transform the United Nations culture of post-conflict response into prevention before a conflict. We must never stop learning lessons about what works and what does not. We must deliver on our promise of never again.

**Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Your personal presence, Madam President, at today's debate on the prevention of conflicts in Africa shows the importance that your country, Rwanda, attaches to the security, stability and development of our continent. We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs

and Cooperation of Togo and commend the strength of the message that he transmitted to the Council today on the topic of peace in Africa. My Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had originally planned to join the Council for today's debate, asked me to convey his sincere regrets that he was not able to do so for urgent reasons that required his presence in Rabat. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his contribution to the debate, as well as our colleague, Mr. Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, for the perspective that he has brought to our debate on behalf of our continent, Africa.

Today's debate takes place at a time when Africa is preparing to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the African Union as a result of the merger of the Casablanca and Monrovia groups and the far-sighted and bold vision of the founding fathers of African unity. It also occurs at a time when major challenges to the security and stability of several African States are emerging. Such challenges have given rise to an unprecedented mobilization of Africa, in particular at the subregional level, through the mediation of the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

Africa has significantly won the day in terms of economic and social development, good governance and respect for the fundamental rights of its citizens. However, almost half a century after its decolonization, our continent still faces various crises that continue to destabilize it. While a significant set of multilateral, regional, subregional and national mechanisms, as well as arrangements established in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, have be set up to prevent and manage conflicts, to build peace and to protect civilians and human rights, the fact remains that the lives of millions of men, women and children in Africa continue today to be threatened by cycles of conflict and by the re-emergence of separatism at a high human cost, jeopardizing all efforts for the sustainable development and growth of the continent.

That can be explained less by the failure of established mechanisms that have undoubtedly spared millions of lives in Africa and elsewhere than by the lack of action with regard to the root causes that give rise to or fuel conflicts. Such underlying causes, referred to in great detail this morning by Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, have their roots internally in the difficulties encountered by some States to strengthen their State institutions, to manage democratic transitions and to promote sustainable socioeconomic development. Externally, the regional dimension of conflicts on the continent is becoming ever more important, as is the destabilizing effect of international criminal and terrorist networks.

All conflict-prevention and -resolution policies must incorporate the establishment of a national and regional environment conducive to peace and stability, addressing in an integrated and comprehensive manner the underlying multidimensional causes of conflict.

At the national level, recent developments in Africa have underscored the importance of putting in place governance models and national institutions that are efficient and credible through participatory and inclusive processes that continuously seek to meet the aspirations of populations, especially of women and young people, who are the primary targets of conflict, and aiming at the promotion of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and socioeconomic progress.

Considerable progress has been made on the continent in terms of political participation and socioeconomic development. That progress needs to be sustained and taken further, with full respect for the sovereignty of African countries, to establish an environment conducive to social harmony.

Furthermore, it goes without saying that there can be no peace without sustainable development. Poverty eradication is an important and essential measure for establishing lasting peace and stability on the continent.

Against the backdrop of the growing funds and ever more accessible sophisticated technology at the disposal of armed groups, separatist movements and terrorist and criminal networks, the building of African States' capacities to extend their authority throughout their territories and improve border controls is of crucial importance.

African States must be supported in establishing modern security institutions capable of safeguarding security across their territories and protecting their citizens. In that context, we commend the efforts made by the United Nations and Africa's bilateral partners to strengthen African capacities, especially in security sector reform and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

In the light of the ever more regional character of conflicts, it is important for States to come together and support each other more in the interests of common and shared stability, overcoming bilateral differences, be they real or artificial, that impede the establishment of effective and inclusive cooperation. Such cooperation is today a necessity for responding to the multidimensional threats affecting all of the subregions of Africa. The destabilizing activities of criminal and terrorist networks have become a real and palpable threat to the stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of African countries. They require the rapid development of greater synergy at the bilateral, subregional and international levels.

Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the affected countries of the region and the subregion to support State institutions and the various mechanisms established at the subregional level to tackle the underlying causes of conflicts is more essential than ever.

We welcome the ever more integrated approach taken to peace and security, development and the humanitarian situations by the Organization, as seen in the Sahel region.

The vision set out in the 1992 document entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (S/24111) is highly relevant for strengthening the preventative dimension of the action of the United Nations. It is important for the Organization to continue moving forward with that vision while seeking the peaceful resolution of disputes, especially through negotiation, promoting realistic, pragmatic and lasting approaches and encouraging parties to find compromises, free of any coercion.

I cannot conclude without paying tribute to the tireless efforts and personal commitment of the Secretary-General to preventing conflict in Africa through his good offices and his personal envoys and special representatives, as well as for the remarkable work carried out by the various United Nations entities on the ground in favour of peace, stability and development in Africa. I would also like to pay tribute to the important contribution made by Blue Helmets to preserving peace, especially in Africa.

**Mr. Kim Sook** (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you, Madam, and the Rwandan presidency for convening this important meeting. I also extend my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing and to Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, who spoke on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union (AU).

The draft presidential statement that we will adopt today appropriately stresses the necessity of addressing the root causes of conflicts in Africa and provides for useful measures, not only at the national but also the regional and international levels.

Africa has shown leadership in its effort to prevent and resolve conflicts in the region. The commitment of African leaders has borne fruit. The number and intensity of conflicts in the region have been reduced in the past decade. However, peace and security challenges in Africa still constitute the majority of the work of the Security Council, and the international community must remain resilient in tackling the root causes. Addressing the root causes is a broad agenda that encompasses the political, socioeconomic, humanitarian and governance areas.

The early prevention of conflicts cannot only prevent casualties, but also provides an opportunity to enjoy the fruits of economic development. Sustainable development should be secured as a top priority, with a long-term perspective. We recognize the mutually reinforcing linkage between development and security. In that sense, it is encouraging that Africa has shown remarkable economic progress for the past decade. Per capita real gross domestic product has increased by 30 per cent, and foreign investment has tripled over the past 10 years. African States and the international community should make efforts not to lose the current stream of economic development.

The building of strong and effective national institutions should be addressed, given the fact that a large number of new civil wars have occurred in countries that had already had civil wars. Institution-building efforts should be carried out to incorporate the principal of national ownership, the inclusion of diverse stakeholders, the participation of women, the inclusion of new, integrated approaches in targeted sectors, and the strengthening of civilian capacity and cooperation between the AU and the United Nations.

It is notable that overall governance in Africa has been enhanced. However, African Sates are encouraged to share lessons learned in post-conflict process, as the cycle of conflict takes similar forms in many places.

African States should also meet their primary responsibility to end impunity with the utmost urgency.

Ending the culture of impunity is a prerequisite for the prevention of conflicts. In that regard, as a party to the Rome Statute, we value the important role of the International Criminal Court.

Despite that great progress, Africa still faces challenges when it comes to conflict-prevention efforts. Challenges include the unique diversity and complexity of the situations, the diverse stakeholders involved in the conflict, a lack of political will and insufficient resources and capacities for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Those challenges still hinder the early and effective prevention of conflicts. Focus should be put on the effective implementation of the current mechanisms. At the national and local levels, locally driven solutions tailored to the specific conditions prevailing should be promoted. Homegrown conflict-resolution mechanisms rooted in local practice can fill the gap and meet local needs for justice, peace and reconciliation. Institutions of national pride and integrity, such as a forum of elders, can offer a path to conflict prevention, reconciliation and peacebuilding. Homegrown solutions can provide the best answers to conflicts involving diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

At the regional level, African leadership and ownership of the region's peace and security challenges is imperative. We note and commend the African peace and security architecture. We also recognize the constructive initiatives of the regional and subregional organizations in coming up with creative alternatives in conflict prevention and resolution.

The concept of a neutral international force, initiated by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, has finally borne fruit with the introduction of an Intervention Brigade within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Effective burden-sharing with regional and subregional organizations is not only cost-effective but also leads to successful results.

The conflict-prevention tools used by the United Nations Office in West Africa are a good example of good offices and mediation activities being conducted in close cooperation with the AU and the Economic Community of West African States. Yet African States must show greater commitment and a stronger will in the context of conflict prevention by providing more resources to regional and subregional initiatives.

At the international level, we note that the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the AU has been growing steadily through the holding of annual consultations between the AU Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council. That is a good indication of the political will of the Security Council, given that the AU Peace and Security Council is the only regional organization with which the Security Council meets annually. It is also a good sign that some of the recommendations made by the AU Council form the basis of the Security Council's deliberations, as was recognized in resolution 2046 (2012), on the Sudan.

However, the political relations between the two organs can be improved by building confidence and securing predictability. In addition, the Security Council should enhance its communication with regional and subregional peace and security bodies.

As part of our own efforts to build a stronger partnership with African States, the Republic of Korea has been organizing the Korea-Africa Forum with the AU since 2006. The Seoul Declaration adopted at the third Forum, hosted last October, deals with peace and security, trade and investment and development issues, with a view to deepening the Korea-Africa cooperative partnership. We are supporting capacity-building in the areas of security, poverty eradication and economic growth. We hope that those bilateral efforts will contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict in Africa.

**Mr. Araud** (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome your presence here, Madam President, and commend Rwanda's initiative to convene this debate on the prevention of conflict in Africa.

In 1994, Rwanda experienced an internecine genocide that resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and that the United Nations and its Security Council were not able to stop. Therefore today no one is better placed than your country, Madam President, to know that in order to prevent a conflict, whatever its nature, it is crucial to address its root causes, which over time fuel resentment, stir up hatred and even, ultimately, lead to violence.

When a conflict looms, the United Nations uses conflict-prevention tools. The Secretary-General can use his good offices or appoint special envoys to conduct mediation. The Dakar and Libreville regional offices are there to support those efforts. For its part, the Security Council can send political messages or

take preventive measures, or even impose sanctions as necessary.

However, such preventive measures, which are aimed at alleviating existing tensions in the balance of power, sometimes come too late and are thus insufficient to curb antagonisms or stop the crisis from breaking out or the recurrence of a conflict. All too often, the United Nations is reduced to dealing only with security and humanitarian questions and seeking to minimize the impact of a conflict on the civilian population.

That is why, over and beyond managing the short-term factors causing conflict in Africa, the United Nations must continue to work to better anticipate problems by seeking to deal as soon as possible with the root causes of conflicts. Those causes are often multiple and complex. In Mali, for instance, the swift holding of democratic elections in July will be an important stage in the process of national reconciliation, but the country must hold an inclusive dialogue so as to resolve the long-standing demands of the different segments of Malian society, which contributed to plunging the country into chaos.

Conflicts can also be linked to economic and social issues. In the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, it will be indispensable, so as to put an end to the recurring crisis in the region, to address issues related to the dividing up of mining resources and arable land. The failure to involve women in decision-making and transition processes is also worrisome. We should support the implementation of mechanisms aimed at ensuring their full participation in reconciliation, crisis-resolution and electoral processes.

The absence of the rule of law, police and a justice system further intensifies those factors and represents, in and of itself, a structural cause of conflict. In the absence of credible military or police forces, all too often it is armed groups that take control of a region or a State. In Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, the weakness of the army and the police is what led to the conflicts we are seeing today. In Somalia, the strengthening of Transitional Government forces will be crucial to the lasting stabilization of the country.

Justice also plays a crucial role in the prevention of conflict. It is essential because impunity for criminals always fuels resentment, which leads yesterday's victims to want to take justice into their own hands and thereby become the criminals of tomorrow. Justice is also a permanent reminder that resort to violence is illegal and that the perpetrators of crimes, whoever they may be, will be punished. That is why the functioning of judicial institutions is key. Failing that, the International Criminal Court (ICC) must be able to punish the perpetrators of the most serious crimes. There can be no peace without justice. That is why we regret the absence of a reference to the ICC, which is an essential instrument for conflict prevention in Africa, in the draft presidential statement to be adopted later by the Council.

The great diversity of the root causes of conflicts should not represent a challenge to the competence of the Security Council. Even though economic or social issues are sometimes the causes of a conflict, the Council must be able to address them, in close cooperation with the African Union and subregional African organizations, in conformity with Chapter VIII of the Charter. The mediation conducted by President Mbeki between the Sudan and South Sudan, with the support of the Security Council, and the Secretary-General's Framework agreement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, supported by the African Union, shows that the United Nations and African organizations today have the ability to tackle together the specific root causes of conflicts.

The actions of the Council can also be based on the principle of the responsibility to protect, which is an essential instrument to prevent atrocities. Its implementation has seen considerable progress since its consensus-based definition, in 2005. The State has the primary responsibility to protect its own population, but if it does not shoulder that responsibility, the international community has a duty to act resolutely. It cannot, at the risk of being complicit, stop at a passive principle of sovereignty and remain inactive in the face of massacres and mass rapes. In Libya, the Council was able to act preventively and it can be proud of that fact.

In conclusion, I would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement that Rwanda has presented, which we are prepared to adopt.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now take the floor in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of my country, Rwanda.

(*spoke in English*)

I have been honoured to preside over today's very important debate on the theme "Prevention of conflicts

in Africa: addressing the root causes". Allow me, first, to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for joining us earlier today. I also welcome the presence of my colleague, His Excellency Mr. Elliot Ohin, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Togo, as well as His Excellency Mr. Tekeda Elemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, who is representing the Chairperson of the African Union (AU).

The rationale behind the selection of today's theme lies in the unfortunate fact that around 70 per cent of the Council's agenda relates to conflicts in Africa. Clashes, whether between countries or peoples or between States and their citizenry, are not unavoidable. There can be no issue that the Security Council faces that deserves greater focus or urgent attention than the prevention of conflict. As we shift energy and resources from conflict zone to conflict zone, from crisis to crisis, are we truly fulfilling our mission if we fail to properly examine the factors that cause conflicts and crises to begin with? While each conflict has its unique causes and consequences, there is also a discernible pattern from which we can draw and apply lessons. Those deep-rooted causes include the legacy of colonial rule for Africa, problems of nationality and identity, a lack of democracy and the rule of law, corruption and poor governance, foreign interference, poverty, famine and disease, and the exclusion of groups based on gender, ethnicity, religion, region and other criteria. Preventing conflicts is possible, provided that those elements are addressed and that leaders and stakeholders, together, do not shirk their responsibilities.

Collective efforts in advancing peace and security in Africa have come a long way since the Organization of African Unity was founded, 50 years ago. Since 2002, when the African Union succeeded the Organization of African Unity, Africans across the continent have demonstrated a growing capacity for working together in reducing and preventing conflicts. Of course, there are problems with inconsistent and poor implementation, and the African Union needs and has decided to do more and better. And yet, in my view, there is little doubt that the best initiatives for conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction are emerging from Africa itself, and the United Nations would do well to embrace those ideas.

Much has been said in this Chamber today on the root causes of conflict in Africa. I will therefore limit my statement to three key points — first, democracy and political and economic governance; secondly, regional and subregional integration; and, thirdly, justice and reconciliation.

On democracy and political and economic governance, when the Organization of African Unity was transformed into the African Union, governance, democracy and human rights became a centrepiece of the emergent agenda. Those principles were enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The ethos of democracy and good governance embedded in the Constitutive Act sits alongside the guiding principle that peace and security are vital prerequisites for both. Furthermore, as some before me have pointed out earlier today, the AU has adopted processes that have at their core the promotion of governance as a conflict prevention tool, through building a more efficient, responsive and accountable public sector. One of those processes is the African Peer Review Mechanism, mentioned earlier, which assesses participating Governments against a set of agreed principles. It aims to promote and reinforce high standards of governance by analysing systemic or structural problems in countries under review and to provide advice and recommendations before crises erupt. The African Union Peace and Security Architecture was another milestone for integration and conflict prevention in Africa. It has established other important instruments, including the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System and the African Standby Force. Should the Security Council not take careful note of those policy responses? Should it not ask how can we can adapt such initiatives and apply them on a global scale?

On regional and subregional integration, democracy and good governance are not the only tools for conflict prevention in Africa. Another is regional and subregional integration. The vision of the African Union is to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent, driven by its own citizens and capable of standing as a dynamic force in the world. We have sought to build a strong and prosperous African Union with each of its subregional building blocks being able to deal with its own conflicts without foreign interference and lift up the continent and its people. Take, for example, the recent efforts of such regional groupings as the Economic Community of West African States, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region,

the Economic Community of Central African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. Such targeted regional approaches allow us to address other issues that fuel conflict in Africa, such as artificial boundaries and the related issue of nationality and identity, and the remnants of our colonial past that act as conflict-enabling forces, as have been identified by other speakers today.

The collaboration and partnership among the Security Council, the African Union and its subregional organizations is of the utmost importance. We welcome the strengthening of that cooperation over recent years, including through the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. Of course, we can do more, particularly in conflict prevention and resolution, while ensuring that the partnership is coherent, consistent and based on mutual respect.

Justice and reconciliation represent another important tool for conflict prevention in Africa. As the Council may be aware, Rwanda is commemorating this very month the nineteenth year of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi of our country. For Rwanda, justice and reconciliation are inextricably linked. After much trial and error, the Government and the people of Rwanda have come to embrace a home-grown system of reconciliatory justice known as Gacaca. Those courts, which closed their doors in June 2012, handled about 2 million cases in 10 years. Rwanda is in a position to share its unique experience with post-conflict societies, where it applies, of course, and as a means to bring about reconciliation and prevent further conflict. Meanwhile, as was mentioned by a few speakers earlier today, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, while establishing useful jurisprudence, particularly in the area of genocide as a crime and rape as a weapon of war, has handled only 75 cases in 17 years.

Another international tribunal, sometimes presented as a mechanism for conflict prevention, is the International Criminal Court, which was also mentioned earlier today. If any country in the world has reason to support a robust system of international justice, it is Rwanda. However, we do not believe that the International Criminal Court, as it operates today, plays a constructive role in preventing conflict; instead of delivering justice and preventing impunity, in practice the Court has shown itself subject to political manipulation from areas outside conflict zones as well as from competing factions within such zones. We cannot therefore support an international criminal court that condemns crimes committed by some and not by others, or that imposes itself on democratic processes or the will of sovereign peoples. Such a court cannot facilitate reconciliation, which is a vital precursor to peace.

Both as a sovereign nation and as an African member of the Security Council, Rwanda will continue to uphold the principles of justice and fairness and to ensure that the independence and sovereignty of the continent is respected. Once again, I urge the Council and the international community to focus on the structural prevention of conflicts and to examine their underlying political, social and economic causes. We have no doubt that an enhanced partnership between the African Union and the United Nations will yield a better outcome for the prevention of conflict on the continent. In addition, the personal vision and commitment of the Secretary-General to Africa's peace and security will remain an important ingredient in that regard.

I would like to conclude my remarks where I began. It is Rwanda's sincere hope that, through this debate, and in many future forums, the Security Council will direct its focus and energies towards preventing conflicts rather than the mere day-to-day management of crises once they have erupted.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Council has before it the draft text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I wish to thank Council members sincerely for their valuable contributions to the draft presidential statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that they agree to that statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2013/4.

It is so decided.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*